

Defining Greener

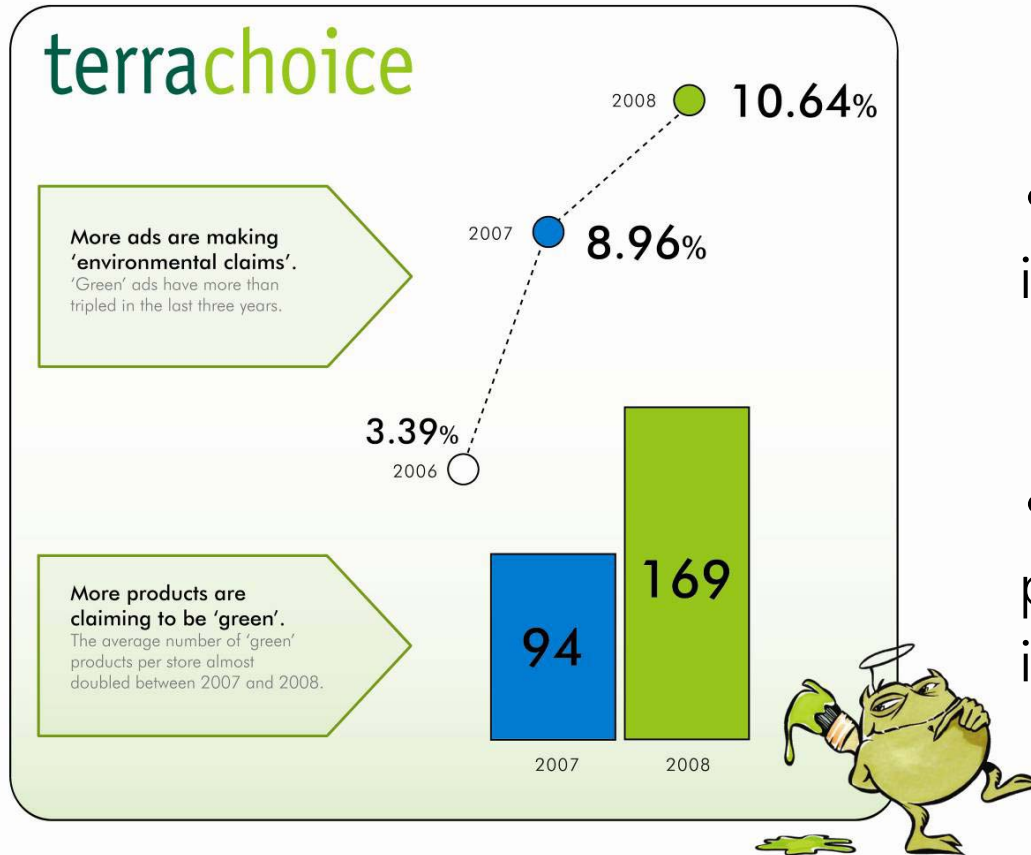
Buying Greener not “Greenwash”

March 14, 2010

scot case
scase@terrachoice.com
www.terrachoice.com
610 779-3770

helping grow the world's
most sustainable companies

Growth of Green



- Number of ads increasing.

- Number of “green” products per store increasing.

Environmental Claims are Growing

- Eco-safe
- Environmentally friendly
- Earth friendly
- Earth smart
- Environmentally safe
- Environmentally preferable
- Essentially non-toxic
- Practically non-toxic
- Made with non-toxic ingredients
- Degradable
- Biodegradable
- Compostable
- Environmentally safe
- CFC-free
- Ozone friendly
- Recyclable

According to the FTC:
FALSE CLAIMS

Seven “Sins” of Greenwashing

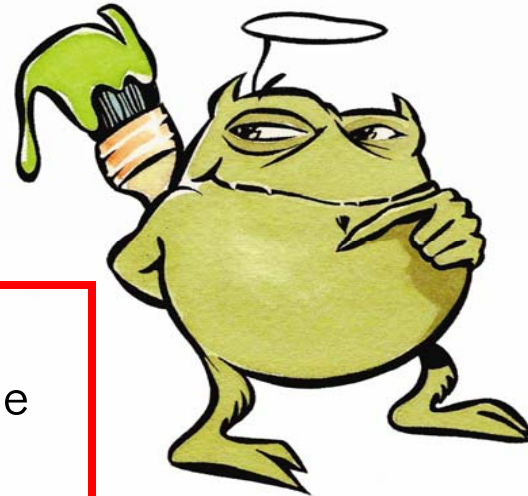
- Sin of Fibbing – Misleading customers about the actual environmental performance of their products.
- Sin of No Proof – Also known as the sin of “just trust us,” some manufacturers are unable to provide proof of their environmental claims.
- Sin of Irrelevance – Factually correct, but irrelevant, environmental assessments (e.g., “CFC-free”)
- Sin of the Hidden Trade-Off – Focusing on one or two environmental facts, but ignoring other significantly more important environmental concerns.



Seven “Sins” of Greenwashing

- Sin of Vagueness – Broad, poorly defined environmental claims (e.g., “100 percent natural”)
- Sin of Lesser of Two Evils – A product can be the most environmentally preferable product in its class, but still be an inappropriate choice (e.g., “organic cigarettes”)
- Worshipping false labels – a product that through words or images gives the impression of third-party endorsement where no such endorsement actually exists; fake labels, in other words.

The Seven Sins of Greenwashing report, released 4/15/09, is available at <www.sinsofgreenwashing.org>





To Avoid Greenwashing...

The environmental standards most widely recognized by green purchasers:



<www.ecologo.org>

- Founded 1988
- 100 standards
- 6,500 certified products



<www.energystar.gov>

- Founded 1992
- 50 standards
- "Thousands and thousands" of *registered* products



<www.greenseal.org>

- Founded 1989
- 30 standards
- 3,650 certified products

Comparing Eco- Labels

WARNING:

Not All Environmental Claims Are Created Equal

Learn to ask about:

- Validity of the standard
- Standard setting process
- Verification process





Standard Validity

- Clear and consistent meaning
- Very specific requirements
- Information should be meaningful and verifiable
- Must not conflict with Federal Trade Commission *Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims.*



Standard Setting Process

- No conflict of interest
- Lifecycle considerations
- Broad stakeholder participation
- Transparent development process
- Comments publicly available



Verification Process

- Self verification
- Self verification with random audits
- Independent third-party certification
- Independent third-party certification with on-site and random audits





Using Eco-Labels

Good News:

Labels make life easier.



Recommended Contract Language

- "Products purchased under this contract must provide demonstrable proof of meeting the _____ standard. The _____ standard is available at <_____>."
- "Products purchased under this contract must provide demonstrable proof of meeting the **Energy Star** standard. The **Energy Star** standard is available at <www.energystar.gov>."
- "Products purchased under this contract must provide demonstrable proof of meeting the **EPEAT** standard. The **EPEAT** standard is available at <www.epeat.net>."



Recommended Contract Language

"Products purchased under this contract must be EcoLogo certified or provide demonstrable proof of meeting the EcoLogo standard and certification requirements. The EcoLogo standard and certification requirements are available at < >
>www.ecologo.org



Recommended Contract Language

"Products purchased under this contract must be _____ certified or provide demonstrable proof of meeting the _____ standard and certification requirements. The _____ standard and certification requirements are available at < _____ >."

www.ecologo.org and
www.greenseal.org

EcoLogo or Green Seal EcoLogo or Green Seal EcoLogo or Green Seal





Popular Labels

- Chlorine Free Products Association – <www.chlorinefreeproducts.org>
- EcoLogo (Environmental Choice) – <www.ecologo.org>
- Energy Star – <www.energystar.gov/purchasing>
- EPEAT - <www.epeat.net>
- Forest Stewardship Council – <www.fsc.org>
- Green-e – <www.green-e.org>
- Green Guard – <www.greenguard.org>
- Green Seal – <www.greenseal.org>
- Green Building Council (LEED) – <www.usgbc.org/leed>
- Scientific Certification Systems – <www.scscertified.com>
- TCO – <www.tcodevelopment.com>
- Water Sense – <www.epa.gov/watersense>

Best Advice

If a supplier is making a public claim, ask for public proof.

Questions?

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